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THE
RIGHTS OF MAN,

AS EXHIBITED IN A
LECTURE,

Read at the PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,
IN NEWCASTLE,

To which is now first added,
AN INTERESTING CONVERSATION,
Between a Gentleman and the Author, on the Subject
of his Scheme.

WITH
The Queries sent by the Rev. Mr. J. MUR-
RAY, to the SOCIETY in Defence of the
Same.

AND
A SONG OF TRIUMPH FOR THE PEOPLE,
ON THE
RECOVERY OF THEIR LONG LOST RIGHTS.
THE FOURTH EDITION.

BY T. SPENCE.

Th' invention all admir'd, and each, how he
To be the inventor miss'd; so easy it seem'd
Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought
Impossible. MILTON.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,
AND SOLD AT THE CORNER OF CHANCERY-LANE,
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P R E F A C E.

WHAT the celebrated Dean Swift said upon another Occasion, do I say upon this: viz. " I hope the Reader need not be told, that I do not in the least intend my own Country in what I say upon this Occasion." No, indeed, I certainly am not so infatuated as to expect the People here to become so systematical in their Public Plans, for then there would be no cause for cavilling and cobling, so pleasing to most Geniuses. Both those in Office and those out of Office would then have nothing to do but mind their respective Businesses, which would be deemed by too many but sorry employment. Partial Re-

A 2 forms,

forms, or by Piece-meal Reformation, best suits such an inconsistent People. I therefore beg to be understood as laying down a System of Government for the free-born, unshackled Minds of the North-American and African Savages, who have not yet learned to look upon blood-sucking Landlords and State Leeches, with that timorous, superstitious, and cringing reverence, paid to such Miscreants, in a Country so well bred as this.

London,
Nov. 19, 1792.

The Author,

A LECTURE, read at the Philosophical Society in Newcastle, on the 8th of November, 1775, for Printing of which the Society did the Author the honour to expel him.

MR. PRESIDENT,

IT being my turn to Lecture, I beg to give some thoughts on this important question, viz. Whether Mankind in Society, reap all the advantages from their natural and equal rights of property in land and liberty, which in that state they possibly may, and ought to expect? And as I hope you, Mr. President and the good company here are sincere friends to truth, I am under no apprehensions of giving offence by defending her cause with freedom.

That property in land and liberty among men, in a state of nature, ought to be equal, few, one would fain hope, would be foolish enough to deny. Therefore, taking this to be granted, the country of any people, in a native state, is properly their common, in which each of them has an equal property, with free liberty to sustain himself and connexions with the animals, fruits, and other products thereof. Thus such a people reap

jointly the whole advantages of their country, or neighbourhood, without having their right in so doing called in question by any, not even by the most selfish and corrupted. For upon what must they live, if not upon the productions of the country in which they reside? Surely to deny them that right is, in effect, denying them a right to live.—Well, methinks some are now ready to say, but is it not lawful, reasonable, and just for this people to sell, or make a present, even of the whole of their country, or common, to whom they will, to be held by them and their heirs, even for ever?

To this I answer, If their posterity require no grosser materials to live and move upon than air, it would, certainly be very ill-natured, to dispute their right of parting with what of their own, their posterity would never have occasion for; but if their posterity cannot live but as grossly as they do, the same gross materials must be left them to live upon. For a right to deprive any thing of the means of living, supposes a right to deprive it of life; and this right ancestors are not supposed to have over their posterity.

Hence it is plain, that the land or
earth,

earth, in any country or neighbourhood, with every thing in or on the same, or pertaining thereto, belongs at all times to the living inhabitants of the said country or neighbourhood in an equal manner. For, as I said before, there is no living but on land and its productions, consequently what we cannot live without, we have the same property in, as in our lives.

Now as society ought properly to be nothing but a mutual agreement among the inhabitants of a country, to maintain the natural rights and privileges of one another against all opposers, whether foreign or domestic, it should lead one to expect to find those rights and privileges, no farther infringed upon, among men pretending to be in that state, than necessity absolutely required. I say again, it should lead one to think so. But I am afraid, whoever does will be mightily mistaken. However, as the truth here is of much importance to be known, let it be boldly fought out; in order to which, it may not be improper to trace the present method of holding land among men in society, from its original.

If we look back to the origin of the

the present nations, we shall see that the land, with all its appurtenances, was claimed by a few, and divided among themselves, in as assured a manner, as if they had manufactured it, and it had been the work of their own hands. and by being unquestioned, or not called to an account for such usurpations and unjust claims, they fell into a habit of thinking, or which is the same thing, to the rest of mankind, of acting as if the earth was made for or by them, and did not scruple to call it their own property, which they might dispose of without regard to any other living creature in the universe. Accordingly they did so, and no man, more than any other creature, could claim a right to so much as a blade of grass, or a nut or an Acorn, a Fish or a Fowl, or any natural production whatever, though to save his life, without the permission of the pretended proprietor; and not a foot of land, water, rock, or heath, but was claimed by one or other of those lords; so that all things, men as well as other creatures who lived, were obliged to owe their lives to some or other's property, consequently they like the creatures were claimed, and certainly as pro-

properly as the wood, herbs, &c. that were nourished by the soil. And so we find, that whether they lived, multiplied, worked, or fought, it was all for their respective lords, and they, God bless them, most graciously accepted of all as their due. For by granting the means of life, they granted the life itself, and of course they thought they had a right to all the services and advantages that the life or death of the creatures they gave life to could yield.

Thus the title of gods seems suitably enough applied to such great beings: nor is it to be wondered at that no services could be thought too great by poor, dependent, needy wretches to such mighty and all-sufficient lords, in whom they seemed to live and move and have their being. Thus were the first land-holders usurpers and tyrants; and all who have since possessed their lands, have done so by right of inheritance, purchase, &c. from them, and the present proprietors, like their predecessors, are proud to own it; and like them too, they exclude all others from the least pretence to their respective properties. And any one of them still can by laws of their own making, oblige every living creature

to

to remove off his property, (which, to the great distress of mankind, is too oft put in execution) so of consequence, were all the land-holders to be of one mind, and determined to take their properties into their own hands, all the rest of mankind might go to heaven if they would, for there would be no place found for them here. Thus men may not live in any part of this world, not even where they are born but as strangers and by the permission of the pretender to the property thereof: which permission is for the most part paid extravagantly for, and they are still advancing the terms of permission, though many people are so straitened to pay the present demands, that it is believed in a short time, if they hold on, there will be few to grant the favour to. And those Land-makers, as we shall call them, justify all this by the practice of other manufacturers, who take all they can get for the products of their hands, and because that every one ought to live by his business as well as he can, and consequently so ought Land-makers. Now having before supposed it both proved and allowed, that mankind have as equal and just a property in land as they

they have in liberty, air, or the light and heat of the sun, and having also considered upon what hard conditions they enjoy those common gifts of nature, it is plain they are far from reaping all the advantages from them, which they may and ought to expect.

But lest it should be said, that a system whereby they may reap more advantages consistent with the nature of society cannot be proposed, I will attempt to shew the outlines of such a plan. Let it be supposed then, that the whole people in some country, after much reasoning and deliberation, should conclude, that every man has an equal property in the land in the neighbourhood where he resides. They therefore resolve, that if they live in society together, it shall only be with a view, that every one may reap all the benefits from their natural rights and privileges possible. Therefore, a day is appointed on which the inhabitants of each parish meet, in their respective parishes, to take their long lost Rights into possession, and to form themselves into corporations. So, then each parish becomes a corporation, and all the men who are inhabitants become members or burghers. The land
with

with all that appertains to it, is in every parish, made the property of the corporation or parish with as ample power to let, repair or alter all, or any part thereof as a Lord of the manor enjoys over his lands, houses, &c. but the power of alienating the least morsel, in any manner, from the parish, either at this or any time hereafter, is denied. For it is solemnly agreed to, by the whole nation, that a parish that shall either sell, or give away, any part of its landed property, shall be looked upon with as much horror and detestation, and used by them as if they had sold all their children to be slaves, or massacred them with their own hands. Thus are there no more nor other landlords, in the whole country than the parishes; and each of them is sovereign landlord of its own territories.

There you may behold the rent, which the people have paid into the parish treasuries employed by each parish in paying the government its share of the sum, which the parliament or national congress at any time grants; in maintaining and relieving its own poor, and people out of work; in paying the necessary officers their salaries; in building, repairing and
adorn-

adorning its houses, bridges, and other structures; in making and maintaining convenient and delightful streets, highways, and passages both for foot and carriages; in making and maintaining canals, and other conveniences for trade and navigation; in planting and taking in waste grounds; in providing and keeping up a magazine of ammunition and all sorts of arms sufficient for all its inhabitants in case of danger from enemies; in premiums for the encouragement of agriculture, or any thing else thought worthy of encouragement; and, in a word, in doing whatever the people think proper; and not as formerly, to support and spread luxury, pride, and all manner of vice. As for corruption in elections, it has now no being or effect among them; all affairs to be determined by voting either in a full meeting of a parish, its committees, or in the house of Representatives are done by balloting, so that votings, or elections among them, occasion no animosities, for none need to let another know for which side he votes; all that can be done, therefore, in order to gain a majority of votes for any thing, is to make it appear in the best light possible by speaking or

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writing,

writing. Among them government does not meddle in every trifle, but on the contrary, allows to each parish the power of putting the laws in force in all cases, and does not interfere, but when they act manifestly to the prejudice of society, and the rights and liberties of mankind as established in their glorious constitution and laws. For the judgment of a parish may be as much depended upon as that of a house of lords, because they have as little to fear from speaking or voting according to truth, as they.

A certain number of neighbouring parishes, as those in a town or county, have each an equal vote in the election of persons to represent them in Parliament, Senate, or Congress: and each of them pays equally towards their maintenance. They are chosen thus: all the candidates are proposed in every parish on the same day, when the election by balloting immediately proceeds in all the parishes at once to prevent too great a Concourse at one place, and they who are found to have the majority on a proper survey of the several poll books are acknowledged to be their representatives.

A man by dwelling a whole year in any parish becomes a parishioner, or mem-

member of its corporation ; and retains that privilege, till he live a full year in some other, when he becomes a member in that parish, and immediately loses all his right to the former for ever, unless he chuse to go back and recover it, by dwelling again a full year there. Thus none can be a member of two parishes at once ; and yet a man is always a member of one, though he move ever so oft.

If in any parish should be dwelling strangers from foreign nations, or people from distant parishes, who by sickness or other casualties should become so necessitous as to require relief before they have acquired a settlement by dwelling a full year therein ; then this parish, as if it were their proper settlement, immediately takes them under its humane protection, and the expences thus incurred by any parish in providing for those not properly their own poor being taken account of, is discounted by the exchequer, out of the first payment made to the State. Thus poor strangers being the poor of the State, are not looked upon with an envious evil eye lest they should become burthensome ; neither are the poor harrassed about in the extremity of distress, and perhaps in a

dying condition, to gratify the litigiousness of parishes.

All the men in every parish, at times of their own chusing, repair together, to a field for that purpose, with their officers, arms, banners, and all sorts of martial music, in order to learn, or retain the complete art of war: there they become soldiers! Yet not to molest their neighbours unprovoked, but to be able to defend what none have a right to dispute, their title to the enjoyment of; and woe be to them who occasion them to do this! they would use them worse than highway-men, or pirates, if they got them in their power.

There is no army kept in pay among them, in times of peace; as all have property alike to defend, they are alike ready to run to arms when their country is in danger: and when an army is to be sent abroad, it is soon raised, of ready trained soldiers, either as volunteers, or by casting lots in each parish for so many men.

Besides, as each man has a vote in all the affairs of his parish, and for his own sake must wish well to the public, the land is let in very small farms, which makes employment for a greater number of hands, and makes more victualing of all kinds be raised.

There

There are no tolls or taxes of any kind paid among them, by native or foreigner, but the aforesaid rent, which every person pays to the parish, according to the quantity, quality, and conveniences of the land, housing, &c. which he occupies in it. The government, poor, roads, &c. &c. as said before, are all maintained, by the parishes with the rent; on which account, all wares, manufactures, allowable trade, employments, or actions, are entirely duty-free. Freedom to do any thing whatever cannot there be bought; a thing is either entirely prohibited as theft, or murder; or entirely free to every one without tax or price! and, the rents are still not so high, notwithstanding all that is done with them, as they were formerly for only the maintenance of a few haughty, unthankful landlords. For the government, which may be said to be the greatest mouth, having neither excisemen, custom-house-men, collectors, army, pensioners, bribery, nor such like ruin-nation vermin to maintain, is soon satisfied, and, moreover, there are no more persons employed in offices, either about the government or parishes, than are absolutely necessary; and their salaries are but just sufficient

to maintain them suitably to their offices. And as to the other charges, they are but trifles, and might be increased or diminished at pleasure.

But though the rent, which includes all public burdens, were obliged to be somewhat raised, what then? All other nations have a devouring landed interest to support besides those necessary expences of the public; and they might be raised very high indeed before their burden would be as heavy as that of their neighbours, who pay rent and taxes too. And it surely would be the same, for a person in any country to pay for instance an increase of rent if required, as to pay the same sum by little and little upon every thing he gets.— It would certainly save him a great deal of trouble and inconvenience, and government much expence.

But what makes this prospect yet more glorious is, that after this empire of right and reason is thus established, it will stand forever. Force and corruption attempting its down-fall, shall equally be baffled, and all other nations struck with wonder and admiration at its happiness and stability, shall follow the example; and thus the whole earth shall at last be happy, and live like brethren. *An*

*An Interesting Conversation, between
a Gentleman and the Author, on
the Subject of his Scheme.*

Gent. So I understand you are the Author of this strange Lecture?

Auth. Yes, Sir.

Gent. Well, though I am a friend to the Reformation of the world, I did not expect any one's ideas would have been carried to such extravagant lengths on the subject as your's.

Auth. And I am as strangely puzzled to conceive how any one, not afraid of the freedom of his own thoughts, could stop any thing short of the system there laid down.

Gent. Indeed ! But who, pray, among all the Revolutionists in either America, France, or England, or any where else, ever disputed or attempted to invalidate the rights of the landed interest ? Or, does Paine, whose publications seem to satisfy the wishes of the most sanguine Reformers, glance in the least on their rights ? This is taking too great liberties.

Auth. I cannot help it. I would sooner not think at all, than check my thoughts

thoughts on a subject so important.—I hate patching and cobbling. Let us have a perfect system that will keep itself right, and let us have done; for what is radically wrong must be a continual plague.

But, Sir, why all this anxiety and concern for the interests of landlords? Those who can reward as they can will never want advocates to defend their cause, whether it be good or bad. “Will you plead for Baal? If Baal be a god, let him plead for himself.”

The Reformers, of whom you say are none, indulge themselves in criticizing men, and condemning customs and establishments as old and as defensible as the monopoly of land, and think they are only using the Rights of Men: allow me, therefore, to take the same liberty with what I think amiss; and let Baal, as I say, plead for himself. So, sir, your servant, you may dislike my free manner of defending doctrines, which I think of such magnitude.

Gent. Nay, stop a little sir, you must excuse me, I was only acting in character; you must allow Baal, as you say, to plead for himself, for I being a landlord cannot be expected to lose an estate without

out regret; therefore, indulge me with the solution of such difficulties as appear to me in the principles and execution of your plan, that if I am a loser I may be satisfied that the public good absolutely requires it.

You build your system, I observe, on the supposition that men have the same right to property of land as they have to liberty, and the light and heat of the sun, which I grant is a very just position, respecting men in a natural, or in their primeval state; but this antient and universal right is so set aside and disused that it seems quite forgot and expunged from the catalogue of the Rights of Men; besides, there was nobody found murmuring at the want of it.

Auth. It is, indeed, very amazing that people should never think more seriously of such an essential and inestimable privilege, considering the many express declarations to the purpose, to be met with both in the scriptures and in the best of prophane authors. Permit me, then, to produce two or three of the most remarkable passages: and first, from Leviticus, chap. 25th, “And thou
“ shalt number seven sabbaths of years
“ unto thee, seven times seven years;
and

“ and the space of the seven sabbaths
 “ of years shall be unto thee forty and
 “ nine years. Then shalt thou cause
 “ the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound,
 “ on the tenth day of the seventh month,
 “ in the day of atonement shall ye make
 “ the trumpet sound throughout all your
 “ land. And ye shall hallow the fifti-
 “ eth year, and proclaim liberty through-
 “ out all the land, unto all the inha-
 “ bitants thereof: It shall be a Jubilee
 “ unto you; and ye shall return every
 “ man unto his possession, and ye shall
 “ return every man unto his family.”
 And again in the same chapter it is said,
 “ The land shall not be sold for ever;
 “ for the land is mine; for ye are
 “ strangers and sojourners with me.”
 Thus you see God Almighty himself is
 a very notorious leveller, and certainly
 meant to stir up the people every fifti-
 eth year, to insist upon liberty and equa-
 lity, or the repossession of their just
 rights, whether their masters or creditors
 were agreeable or not, or whether they
 might deem it seditious or no; and we
 may suppose such of the latter as were
 ungodly men would behave very awk-
 wardly and quit their hold with much
 reluct-

reluctance, and would be far from promoting such a revolution.

Then we may be certain that as often as such a periodical revolution happened in favour of the Rights of Man, they must arise from, and were procured by, the irresistible importunities of the slaves and landless men.

Thus we find personal liberty and landed property very properly linked together by our All-wise Creator, nor is the one of much consequence without the other. Indeed, I think all our landless people had better live in slavery under humane masters that would provide them with the necessaries of life, than be turned out of their rights as outcasts upon the face of that earth whereon they must neither feed nor rest.

Well, we have heard what God has said on the subject, let us next hear what man says. Locke, in his Treatise of Government writes thus: "Whether
 " we consider natural reason, which
 " tells us, that men, being once born,
 " have a right to their preservation, and
 " consequently to meat and drink, and
 " such other things as nature affords for
 " their subsistence. Or, Revelation,
 " which gives us an account of those
 " grants

“ grants God made of the world to
 “ Adam, and to Noah and his sons; it
 “ is very clear that God, as King David
 “ says, Psalm 115, 16, has given the
 “ earth to the children of men, given
 “ it to mankind in common.”

Here we find this great man con-
 curring in the same fundamental princi-
 ple as we shall likewise. Puffendorf, in
 his *Whole Duty of Man*, according to
 the law of nature, where he observes,
 that “ As those are the best members
 “ of a community, who without any
 “ difficulty allow the same things to
 “ their neighbour that themselves re-
 “ quire of him, so those are altogether
 “ incapable of society, who, setting a
 “ high rate on themselves in regard to
 “ others, will take upon them to act
 “ any thing towards their neighbour,
 “ and expect greater deference and
 “ more respect than the rest of man-
 “ kind; and, in their insolent manner,
 “ demanding a greater portion unto
 “ themselves of those things, to which
 “ all men having a common right, they
 “ can in reason claim no larger a share
 “ than other men: whence this also is
 “ an universal duty of the law natural,
 “ That no man, who has not a peculiar
 “ right,

“ right, ought to arrogate more to him-
 “ self than he is ready to allow to his
 “ fellows, but that he permit other
 “ men to enjoy equal privileges with
 “ himself-”

Such declarations being frequent in all the best authors, one would think they would rouse the most supine to consider their contemptible and degraded situation, who, from being the rightful lords of the creation, and only a little lower than the angels, and crowned by their Maker with glory and honour tamely prostrate themselves to the earth, for any one that will be insolent enough to pass over.

But, Sir, people never thought it was practicable to enjoy an equal property in land. For the mechanics thought they could not themselves cultivate land if they were possessed of it, and that therefore thousands would be selling their portions to others, which would soon reduce things to the same situation as at present. And besides, they could not be at the trouble nor put themselves so much out of temper, so as like the Jews, to demand a restitution of the land and an abolition of debts every fiftieth year. No, they would rather

fit down contentedly with their pot and their pipe, and their rags and their affronts, though the poor wives and children should be perishing at home of hunger and cold.

But, by giving the land to the parishes they will be eased at once of all those troublesome apprehensions; one hearty revolution and one jubilee will do the business for ever: for we find societies once possessed of land do not easily give it up, but are very tenacious of their property of which we have many instances, there hardly being a corporation but what has landed property, and have retained the same for many ages.

So here is a simple, easy, practicable scheme, which people may see realized in every corporate body; wherefore, as people will now think themselves qualified to manage their own estates by the agency of their parish officers, for their own advantage, they must of course think landlords of no more use, and they will grow weary of them. The payment of rent to a landlord will be like giving money to a highwayman, and they will pant to be rid of their insupportable burdens all at once. They will long to have expunged from the language those
odious

odious words : tolls, taxes, tythes, cesses, and rents. In short, Sir, when the public machine is thus set a going on nature's principles, like nature itself, it will never err to any degree, but on the least aberration immediately rebound back to its just equilibrium.

Gent. But, Sir, I am not so partial to corporation government but I can see many things amiss in them. There is too much party work, and I am afraid the people at large would reap small benefit from their landed property, as is too much the case in most of the corporations already in being.

Auth. The corporations now in being were established in times of ignorance, when very few were qualified to take cognizance of public affairs, wherefore the mass of the burghers were never suffered in their own persons to make choice of their magistrates, but every company or trade chose an elector, and these were to make a kind of sham choice of magistrates and officers, for all this was settled in reality before in the Common Council; and the same practice to the great ease and content of the people is still continued, which I hope you do not think I approve of; for I see no rea-

son why a candidate for a magistracy or other office may not, after proper examination in respect of abilities, be proposed in every distinct company or trade at the same hour, and then in their own persons proceed to election. Candidates would not find it so easy to make a party among the burghers at large, as they do now among their deputies or liverymen; but I hope if the people were but once put right (for they never have been so yet) they would be wise enough never to relapse into insignificance again, and find it worth their while to act in person as much as they could, by admitting of no electors or deputies between them and the person or thing to be voted for; for if a parish were found to be too populous to vote conveniently and expeditiously in one place, they would surely have the sense to divide the parish into such a sufficiency of districts or departments as should render business speedy and generally satisfactory.

I should likewise expect that they would have the sense to cause the parish accounts to be minutely stated and printed, at least every quarter; and the national accounts to be in the same manner printed, at least every year. And I should

I should likewise wish that the rents or rates might be collected monthly, as the poor rate is now, which, when once paid, they would know was in full of all demands.

In short, Sir, if I thought the people at large would ever become so despicably destitute of common sense as to be incapable of conducting such simple transactions with any little accidental variations after being thus fairly put right—I say, instead of exciting by pity as they now do, I would, like their tyrants, hold them in the most sovereign contempt and derision; nay, I would rejoice in seeing them all delivered over to cruel task-masters, planters, negro-drivers, landlords, and all the devils on earth. Moreover, I would endeavour to get into some infernal office myself, and make my thong the most terrible of the terrible.

But that I am far from apprehending will ever be the case, for it is impossible for the world to become generally ignorant again, as it was before the art of printing. Knowledge has been constantly encreasing ever since that happy invention, and will infallably continue to do so while the world endures..

Gent. But I am at a great loss to conceive what will become of all the landed people, gentlemen of the law, gentlemen's servants, many artizans and tradesmen; entirely dependent on the nobility and gentry, and also the soldiers, for you intend all your citizens to be soldiers.

Auth. You will observe, Sir, that I am proceeding in this affair entirely in confidence of the people having common sense, and that they will, when once put right, put it forth to use on all occasions; and, I likewise suppose they may have as much compassion on those affected by the change of affairs, as justice and necessity will admit of. So, in all probability, on that memorable day, that grand jubilee, when every parish in some country shall take into its possession its indubitable rights, I mean the land with all its appurtenances, as structures, buildings, and fixtures, and mines, woods, waters, &c. contained within itself: I say, though according to right and system they must seize upon these, I expect they would leave every person in possession of his money and moveable effects to dispose of as he might chuse. The quondam landlords might therefore be reasonably
expected

expected to subsist comfortably upon these effects all their days with economy, I am sure few of the rest of the people would have as much at that day to their share; and as to their children they would doubtless suit their education to their prospects, which could be no other than to live as sober, industrious citizens, maintained by their own industry. And what should hinder them by trading or farming to encrease their effects under so mild and cherishing government, as well as others? The same may be said of gentlemen of the law, and other eminent artists or tradesmen who might suffer by the change: as for the private soldiers and subalterns I would wish them to be sent every man to his own parish, there to receive his pay for life, and be employed in training his fellow-parishioners; and the general officers, I hope, the government would provide for in like ample manner. And with respect to other individuals, whether servants, mechanics, or revenue officers, who, having no effects accumulated, and might be reduced by any cause whatever, either at this or any future period to require assistance, I hope their respective parishes would prove generous, and sym-

sympathizing benefit societies for them all, untill they could again provide for themselves; and the parishes, no doubt, would contrive to make such persons contribute, if in health, towards the public good, and to this they surely would not object.

Gent. But, friend, what do you expect by all this? Though your scheme should succeed you cannot expect an estate for your trouble, and both you and your posterity for ever must be content to herd with the common mass without any hopes of flattering distinction: if your plan should not succeed, you must expect a spiteful and powerful opposition in all you go about, from those you are seeking to overthrow.

Mr. Paine acts more cautiously, and does not hurt the feelings of any gentleman that is unconnected with government, and so, of course, may retain their good will, notwithstanding all the lengths he goes; and may, even with a good grace, consistent with his reform, enjoy a very handsome estate, and with all his boasted liberty and equality, may roll in his chariot on the labours of his tenants.

Auth. The contempt and ungenerous rebuffs.

rebuffs of the opulent I have already pretty well experienced, and do yet expect; but the feelings occasioned by beholding the struggles of temperance, frugality, and industry, after an honest livelihood, which ought to be easily attainable by every one, have always been sufficiently powerful to enable me to despise them. Yes, those sympathetic feelings were impressed deep on my heart, being first excited by the many difficulties my poor parents met with in providing for, and endeavouring to bring up their numerous family decently and creditably, which I thought very hard, as none could be more temperate, frugal, nor industrious.

I began to look round to know the cause of this piercing grievance and I found thousands rioting in all the abominations of luxury and dissipation, as if there had been no Being in heaven or earth but themselves, and they had been created for the sole purpose of destroying the fruits of the earth. And again I beheld miriads in a much worse condition than my own family. Then I began to read, and I found the savages in Greenland, America, and at the Cape of Good Hope, could all by their hunting

ing and fishing procure subsistence for their families. Then I enquired whether men left that rude state voluntarily for greater comforts in a state of civilization, or whether they were conquered, and compelled into it for the benefit of their conquerors. My experience compelled me to conclude the latter, for I could observe nothing like the effects of a social compact, wherefore I concluded that all our boasted civilization is founded alone on conquest; nor will any men leave their rude state to be treated with contempt, pay rents and taxes, and starve among us. Savages may sometimes suffer want though that is but rare, but the poor tamed wretch drags on a despicable, miserable, and toilsome existence, from generation to generation. This surely looks exceeding bad, that among men in such high refinement and so capable of rendering each other happy by working as they do to each hand, thousands should nevertheless be in so wretched a state that savages would not change conditions with them.

Such studies, Sir, as these, were what stirred me up with an irresistible enthusiasm to lay before the world a plan of society so consonant to the Rights of
Man.

Man, that even savages should envy, and wish to become members thereof.

Gent. But you say nothing of religion.

Auth. Because there can be nothing in such a benevolent arrangement of things repugnant to the true religion, and because that religion depends upon God, and he has declared himself its Protector to the end of the world. It is therefore but presumption in government to pretend to take it into protection, and when they do it is only for some bye end. It is enough if they do not oppose it. God said the workman is worthy of his meat, and we seldom see his faithful servants want. Wherefore, as their own Master is not afraid to trust them in the world, and is able to provide for them, should governments intermeddle in the affair, for God knows best who are his most faithful servants. Those they instructed would surely provide chearfully for their teachers of their own accord; but if any parish at large chose to maintain any favourite preacher, or establish a school, or public library at the parish expence, who could object against it?—And I hope to make every one easy on that head, toleration would be allowed to every religion or opinion not repugnant to the Rights of Man.

QUE.

QUERIES sent to the Philosophical Society, in Newcastle, on the 26th of December, 1775, by the Rev. Mr. J. Murray, on account of Mr. Spence's expulsion.

1. WHETHER, according to the law of nature, has not every one a right to property in land?

2. Whether property acquired upon principles, contrary to the laws of nature, is held by a tenure that can be justified in the sight of the author of nature?

3. Can natural rights ever be proscribed, when they are not forfeited?

4. Do people act contrary to any divine law, when they resume their rights, and recover their property out of the hands of those who have unnaturally invaded it?

5. Are customs that are contrary to the original principles of nature, binding upon the consciences of those, who believe the validity of the laws of nature?

6. Are laws of nature and reason different or the same?

7. Whether is the monopoly of land, consistent with reason and the laws of nature?

8. Can the laws of nature and reason ever be dangerous to society?

9. Are

9. Are the Rights to the enormous dividends of land, possessed by the barons, and many Commons of Great Britain, established upon the principles of nature and reason?

10. Would not the granting every man right to property in land, be as far from leveling Society, as granting all the members of a corporation the same privileges in trade?

11. Was the Jewish jubilee a leveling scheme?

12. Did not the author of nature thereby, secure every Man's property in land, which was restored to him, though he had lost it at the end of 49 years?

13. Would it be inconvenient to the Philosophical Society to read the 25th chapter of Leviticus?

14. Is it implied in the nature of the social compact, that the one half of the contractors should have no right of possessions?

15. May not poor people speak and write concerning their rights, though they may have but little hopes of obtaining them. Is it not hard that they should both be deprived of their rights, and of the liberty of complaining?

16. Suppose Mr. Spence's scheme
D were

were to take effect, what influence would it have upon the Philosophical Society? Would they be losers or gainers?

17. Would it lessen the value of land in Georgia?

18. Will it not take a great quantity of sophistry to answer these questions, consistently with the principles of the Philosophical Society, concerning the expulsion of Mr. Spence?

*A Triumphant Song for the People,
on the Recovery of their Long
Lost Rights.*

HARK! how the trumpet's sound*
Proclaims the land around
The Jubilee!
Tells all the poor oppress'd
No more they shall be cefs'd
Nor landlords more molest
Their property.

The Parish rate is all,
Paid now by great or small
For house or land,
No more by nature's due
God gave the earth to you
And not unto a few,
But to all mankind.

* See Leviticus, chapter 25th.

How hath the oppressor ceas'd,*
 And all the world releas'd
 From misery !
 The fir-trees all rejoice
 And cedars lift their voice,
 Ceas'd now, the feller's noise
 Long rais'd by thee.

The sceptre now is broke,
 Which with continual stroke
 The nations smote !
 Hell from beneath doth rise
 To meet thy lofty eyes
 From the most pompous size,
 How brought to nought !

Since then this Jubilee,
 Sets all at Liberty
 Let us be glad.
 Behold each man return
 To his possession,
 No more like doves to mourn,
 By landlords sad !

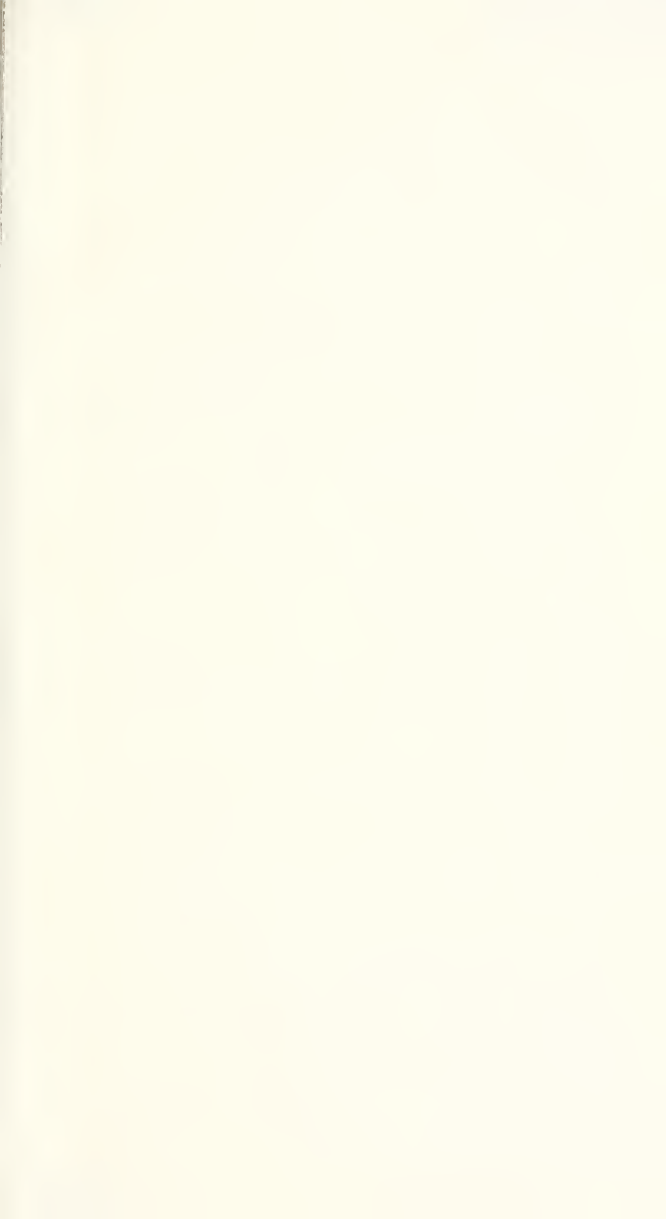
* Read Isaiah, chap. 14.

Swift's Revolution Principle.

“ As to what is called a Revolution
 “ Principle, my opinion was this :
 “ That whenever those evils, which
 “ usually attend and follow a violent
 “ change of Government, were not in
 “ probability so pernicious as the griev-
 “ ance we suffer under a present power,
 “ then the public good will justify such
 “ a Revolution.”

SWIFT'S LETTERS.

F I N I S.



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